

REMARKS

Please reconsider the present application in view of the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering the present application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1, 3, and 4 are pending in the present application. Claim 1 is independent. The remaining claims depend directly from claim 1.

Rejection(s) Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0025823 (“Hara”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,046,119 (“Ghabra”). For the reasons set forth below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that Ghabra is not prior art to the present application. The filing date of the present application, which is February 27, 2004, is prior to the filing date of Ghabra, which is May 19, 2004. Therefore, Ghabra cannot be properly cited in a rejection against the pending claims. Furthermore, the Examiner expressly admits that Hara fails to show or suggest all of the limitations of the pending claims. (See pages 4-6 of the pending office action.) Thus, claims 1, 3, and 4 are allowable. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591, Reference No. 15115/106001.

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Respectfully submitted,

By:  _____

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